Massive Deception Masquerading as Information and Communication: A (largely) Derridean Perspective

Bert Olivier
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3138-1948
University of the Free State
OlivierG1@ufs.ac.za

Abstract

We live in a time of major events in civilisational history, currently centred on the so-called Covid-19 "pandemic." In this global context, contemporary people are at the mercy, largely, of powerful media companies that disseminate officially sanctioned news and opinion pieces about all aspects pertaining to the "pandemic." The very same thing that makes this mainstream media hegemony possible, however, namely the Internet, also allows alternative news sources to circulate censored news and critical opinion so that one witnesses an information and communication-divide on a scale never seen before in history. This paper sets out to reconstruct this information and communication chasm with reference to representative instances of each of the adversarial sides in what may be called a "war of information" and attempts to make this intelligible by interpreting these mainly through the theoretical lens of Jacques Derrida, supplemented by a coda enlisting Jürgen Habermas's work on communication. While the latter does foresee the possibility of authentic communication ("communicative action") despite the constant spectre of miscommunication ("strategic action"), Derrida is less optimistic about this. Instead, taking his cue from Joyce's *Ulysses*, he insists that the very means of "reaching" the other in the act of communicating are also, ineluctably, the means for failing to reach them, and that "receiving" a message from someone can thus either result in a mechanical repetition of the message, or a paradoxical "repeating differently." Moreover, elsewhere he indicates the paradoxical implications of a change of "context" as far as an utterance is concerned. This difference between these two thinkers allows one to get an intellectual grip on the situation unfolding in the world in 2021–2022; a world of ubiquitous information exchanges, implicitly claiming to be communicational exchanges. More specifically, Derrida and Habermas equip one with the communication-theoretical means to ascertain what this plethora of information exchanges amounts to.

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Introduction: A War of (Mis-)information

> A key thing to remember, I think, is if you turned off the media, no one would know there's an epidemic. Even during the surges in Ireland, in both seasons, if you did not have access to the media, you would never know. (Ivor Cummins and D. O'Neill 2021, producers of the film. Covid Chronicles Vimeo, Covid Chronicles 1: 13)

> The effects of this preprogramming, which you know better than I, are admirable and terrifying, and sometimes intolerably violent. (Jacques Derrida, *Ulysses Gramophone*, in Kamuf 1991, 579)

The world of 2021 has witnessed a veritable explosion of information in the context of what is referred to as the Covid-19 "pandemic" and sometimes lampooned as the "plandemic" or the "scamdemic" for reasons probably known to readers of this paper (but which will become clearer below, anyway; see Academy of Ideas 2021; Awake Canada 2022; Mercola 2022.). Because this is the age of the "network society" (Castells 2010) most of the information disseminated across the world on a daily basis depends on the Internet; while some hardliners may still read printed newspapers, the vast majority of people usually find their desired information on web-based sites such as BBC World News, CNN, Al-Jazeera, RT, NBC or France 24—until recently, that is. While many—such as myself—still consult these "mainstream" news sites from time to time for various reasons, events in the course of the last two years (that is, since the start of the so-called "pandemic") have gradually brought about a shift in preference (on my part, too) regarding "reliable" news sources, which include (ironically) internet sites where discussions of important current developments may be seen and/or heard. It should be evident from this that a fundamental global split has occurred—one which may be comprehended by way of what Jean-Francois Lyotard (1988) called a "*differend"* (see Olivier 2021); that is, an instance of complete, irresolvable incommensurability between two or more parties as far as their "idiom" or discursive orientation goes. This, therefore, has the consequence of these respective parties understanding, or interpreting, news sources, discussions and opinion pieces (which themselves evince the same interpretive "split") in incompatible, irreconcilable ways.

The situation sketched above can also be phrased in terms of the famous (and well-known) epistemological divide of the 17th and 18th centuries in European philosophy—that between the (Continental) rationalists and the (British) empiricists (Melchert 1991). For the former, the source of true knowledge was reason, and even if experience furnished the "occasioning causes" of knowledge in the form of ideas—for example perceiving a spherically shaped stone and forming the idea of a geometrically perfect sphere on that basis, or noting the marvellous "design" in nature and concluding from there to the existence of God—it was clearly reason that played the decisive role in adjudicating the veracity of the ideas concerned. This consideration gave rise to the

postulation of so-called "innate (or inborn) ideas" (for example by René Descartes), which were putatively already in the mind of the unborn child in the mother's womb, just waiting to be actualised through "occasioning" experiences. The empiricists, on the other hand, claimed that there is nothing in the mind that was not first experienced through the senses (as evinced in John Locke's notion of the mind being a *tabula rasa* before being "written on" by experience).

Against this backdrop (as the evidence will show, below) one side of the present, "pandemic"-related communicational *differend* uncannily resembles the early modern rationalist position, with a demonstrable claim to quasi-pre-existing ("innate") ideas comprising the basis of the arguments in favour of lockdowns, masking, "vaccination" and so on, while the countervailing position corresponds with the erstwhile empiricist argument (exemplified by David Hume's famous reduction-to-impressions criterion; see Melchert 1991) that no knowledge-claim has merit unless it can be shown to be based on sensory impressions of some sort.

This paper, therefore, addresses the fraught question of "communication" in the current situation, where a *differend* obtains between those who (on the one hand) accept the veracity and trustworthiness of information and prescriptive health-guidelines provided by the WHO, the American CDC and comparable (governmental) health agencies in other countries (usually via the mainstream mass media), and (on the other hand) those who question or reject this information and health-advice on the basis of alternative, experientially oriented, non-mainstream sources of information and health-directives. This is done from a perspective opened up by Jacques Derrida's reading of Joyce's *Ulysses* in terms of the relationship between the notion of the "yes" or iterability, the signature of (and counter-signature to) a text and two types of laughter, as well as by his deconstruction of the concept of "context." Given Derrida's poststructuralist penchant for paradox, his approach is briefly counterbalanced by a comparatively "sober" neo-rationalist account of the pitfalls of communication, as encountered in the work of Jürgen Habermas, specifically as far as his distinction between two types of communication-oriented "action" is concerned, to wit, "communicative action" and "strategic" (or instrumental) action. Before turning to particular instances of the countervailing kinds of "information" circulating in cyberspace today, the relevant work of Derrida will be scrutinised to be able to employ it as angle of incidence in the analytic-interpretive appropriation of representative, current examples of the irreconcilable "information" in question. Habermas's work will receive attention towards the end of the paper.

Derrida on Communication

In *Ulysses Gramophone: Hear Say Yes in Joyce,* Derrida (1991) demonstrates that the same aporia, which confronts the reader of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, namely that a "counter-signature" to the text *is* possible as a novel event, *and* is simultaneously *not* possible as such, faces participants in communication. Hence, the paradox:

communication is *and* is not possible. How does he do that? One may begin with a quotation from Derrida (1991, 576) that articulates the ambivalent condition of what might be termed "the (im-)possibility of communication"—namely, that which makes both communication *and* miscommunication possible:

> In order for the yes of affirmation, assent, consent, alliance, of engagement, signature, or gift to have the value it has, it must carry the repetition within itself. It must *a priori* and immediately confirm its promise and promise its confirmation. This essential repetition lets itself be haunted by an intrinsic threat, by an internal telephone which acts like a parasite, like its mimetic, mechanical double, its incessant parody. (Derrida 1991, 576)

The quasi-transcendental "condition" of (mis-)communication is repeatability or *iterability*, which carries the promise of, as well as the threat to communication or mutual understanding, in itself. How so? For a signifier (word, image, gesture) to be a signifier, it has to be repeatable or iterable—to be meaningful (to have a "signified" or concept corresponding to it), it has to be decipherable, that is, "repeatable" in one way or another. Is an absolutely unique, singular, *unrepeatable* signifier possible? No—it is a contradiction in terms, because no one would be able to interpret or "repeat" it. Ludwig Wittgenstein made the same point when he famously said that there is no such thing as a "private language." Such repeatability is no guarantee for communication, however. As Derrida intimates, if it amounts to mere mechanical repetition, it is questionable whether it has been true to its promise.

As John Caputo (1997, 188) observes, this means that the preconditions of communication (that is, the iterability of the "yes" implied by every communicational act) are analysed in a paradigmatic manner by Derrida in terms of "repeatability." This should surprise no one. After all, as Caputo (1997, 188) reminds one, the "yes" in question here, *if* indeed it *is* a "yes," unavoidably entails repetition:

> To say yes is to be ready to say yes again … If I say "yes" today and then excuse myself tomorrow, then my "yes" will not have been a "yes". … When I say "yes," I promise to remember.

The fact that this implied promise of reaffirming the "yes" of communication is fallible—that it can turn out to be *miscommunication* (intentional or not), is what makes Derrida's work on the conditions of communication relevant to the present time of the "pandemic" (what in some circles is referred to as the "plandemic" or "scamdemic"). Hence, when Derrida (above) writes of the "intrinsic threat" that "haunts" the repetition of the "yes" he is suggesting that an inescapable possibility accompanies the repeatability of the "yes" (the crux of every act of communication) namely, that its repetition may degenerate to something merely automatic, that is, "mechanical"—a suggestion that, as I shall show, applies particularly to the reception of mass-mediated messages in the context of the "pandemic." This is analogous to the "mechanical" repetition or application of the law by a judge in cases bearing a certain resemblance to

one another (cases that set a legal "precedent") instead of a temporary "suspension" of the *law* in order to "re-invent" it for the sake of instantiating *justice* in every novel case before the court (Caputo 1997, 136–137). The point is that, unless the "yes of affirmation" is repeated in a similar manner, by *re-inventing* it, as it were, re-affirming it in every historically new, contextually different communicational situation, it would lose its value. This bears on the "pre-programming" or (re-)iteration of the "yes," or what Derrida (1991, 576) calls "the gramophone effect":

> The *yes* can only speak *itself* if it promises itself its own memory. … The affirmation of the *yes* is the affirmation of memory. *Yes* must preserve itself, and thus reiterate itself, archive its voice in order to give it once again to be heard and understood. … *Yes* gramophones itself and, *a priori*, telegramophones itself.

In an age of advanced telecommunications, what Derrida formulates here should be conspicuously relevant to mutual understanding and/or misunderstanding. In addition to the role played by the "yes" (explicit as well as implicit) as the (dual) condition of the possibility of affirmation *and* negation, communication *and* miscommunication, understanding *and* misunderstanding, under "normal" social conditions of face-to-face communication, there is the question of the technological extension of communication. From his words it is clear that he simultaneously detects in the "yes" the ground of the (im-)possibility of such developed "telecommunication" or telephony. In other words, the repeatability of the "yes" is equally threatened from within with the possibility of an unthinking, "mechanical" repetition where technologically-enhanced communicational prostheses operate. His caveat is expressed as follows (Derrida 1991, 576):

> The desire for memory and the mourning of the word *yes* set in motion the anamnesic machine. And its hypermnesic overacceleration. The machine reproduces the quick … it doubles it with its automaton.

Derrida's phrase, the "desire for memory" marks what has given rise to prodigious acts of anamnesis (remembering) on the part of Georg Hegel, on the one hand, and James Joyce, on the other (Derrida in Caputo 1997, 25; Caputo 1997, 185). Hegel's philosophy of "absolute idealism" is a colossal attempt to "circumscribe" or "circumnavigate" the entire history of human knowledge. Firstly, it preserves the past, and secondly, it anticipates the future, or what is to come, in the form of dialectical logic or thought. The literary counterpart of this is Joyce's *Ulysses*, which achieves the same cyclical accomplishment of recollective-anticipatory "rediscovery"; this time by way of activating the signifying potential of language to the "nth" degree of multivocality. Consequently (in both cases), in a certain sense the possibility of a "yes" as *novel* rejoinder or interpretation is neutralised in advance—hence the "mourning" of the "yes." Put differently, every interpretive response appears to be futile in that it triggers an echo in these texts, mocking it with its "pre-programmed" twin: it has "always already" been said in anticipation by Hegel and Joyce. Derrida intimates that the way is therefore paved—philosophically and literarily—for the automatic, mechanical reproduction of the living ("quick") "yes." Seen in this way, it was always the case that

technology would reduce what Hegel and Joyce had achieved in their respective domains to technical repetition. Caputo (1997, 188) comments as follows on this:

> If the technological repetition, if the "reproduction" is "faithful" enough, I cannot tell whether the voice is living or long since dead, a living "yes" or an automaton. So yes must [be] said, must be constantly repeated, in the face of this threat or internal menace.

The "yes" as repetition is also found in the interpretation of literary texts—marked by a specific "signature" (that of the "author")—in the guise of what Derrida calls a "counter-signature." Although the writer of a text is certainly "present" in the text in so far as she or he is "responsible" for its coming into being, the "signature" does not belong to the "author" of the text in a narrowly psychological sense. It is rather evident in the singular arrangement of signifiers which comprise it (Caputo 1997, 189). For example, Joyce's *Ulysses* displays its own unique "signature" that calls for a "counter-signature" or "repetition" in the form of an interpretation. But *Ulysses* is exceptional in so far as it challenges one with an aporia or a "*double bind*"—one in which humanity has been "caught since Babel and Homer"—expressed by Derrida (1991, 580) in these words:

> … on the one hand, we must write, we must sign, we must bring about new events with untranslatable marks—and this is the frantic call, the distress of a signature that is asking for a *yes* from the other, the pleading injunction for a counter-signature; but on the other hand, the singular novelty of every other *yes*, of every other signature, finds itself already phonoprogrammed in the Joycean corpus.

The upshot of this remark is far-reaching: a "hypermnesic" ("excessively remembering") text like *Ulysses* paralyses critics and interpreters because every possible interpretation appears to meet its counterpart there, in the hyperbolic, semiotically over-invested interiority of the text, which gives the impression that it has circumnavigated the globe, and that it has been equipped with every possible counter-signature. I shall return to the question of counter-signatures below.

Pre-programmed Repetition and Communication in "Pandemic" Space

A similar kind of paralysis would occur on the part of someone confronted by a technically automated repetition, that is, a technologically hyper- and pre-programmed "yes" that has been designed to anticipate every possible salutation. Some examples of such "hyper-programmes" that already function through cyberspace (as opposed to fictional ones, such as the artificial intelligence (AI) "Winston" in Dan Brown's *Origin* [2017]), include Apple's "Siri" and Amazon's "Alexa." These are AI "bots" that have been (pre-)programmed—and are continually being updated)—to assist users in various ways. Here is an indication of what Siri can "do" (O'Boyle 2021):

> At a glance, she will read your last email, text your friend to tell them you're running late, shuffle your road trip playlist on Apple Music, let you know what films are playing today, find a table for three in London or call your dad at work.

> She can also tell you where a good restaurant is nearby, flip a coin, find books by a specific author, set an alarm, give you directions and even set a reminder that will activate only when it recognises that you're in, or have left, a certain location ("pick up dry cleaning" when you leave work, for example).
>
> That's not all though, in fact it probably isn't even half. She'll tell you what the weather is like tomorrow, move meetings, tell you when the next game is for your team and you can even get her to roll a die, along with a series of other things such as teach her how to pronounce your name or tell her which of your contacts are family members. We told you she was pretty smart.

Siri's hypermnesic, pre-programmed responses to "users" asking her questions or giving her tasks to perform, are the electronic-technical equivalent to a literary text like *Ulysses* (or a philosophical work like Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*) in so far as "she" has an answer or a performance ready for anything you might throw at her. As may be gathered from O'Boyle's description of what "she" can "do" above, inscribed within the interiority of "her" artificial "mind" there are multiple (and increasing) options available to her, and if, improbably, users should come up with a question or request not yet considered and built into her memory by her programmers, this (having been recorded) would swiftly lead to an "appropriate" response to it being added to Siri's programmed repertoire. As Derrida might put it, one is "paralysed" by Siri's hyper-programmed technological capacity to respond to an "interlocutor" in the sense that her omni-readiness to field any question or request may incrementally rob users of their capacity to come up with a novel "counter-signature" to Siri's "signature."

Analogously—reverting to what was written in the introduction above—in the communicational space surrounding the current "pandemic" one encounters a media machine apparently hyper-programmed to field any questions about developments concerning Covid-19, such as lockdowns, social distancing, mask-wearing and, most prominently at present (January 2022) "vaccinations." What I mean by this, in general terms, is that there seems to be no deviation from the standard playbook decided on by Dr Anthony Fauci of the NIAID in America, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) as far as the "appropriate" response to the "pandemic" is concerned; except, of course, the well-known vacillation on Fauci's part regarding the wearing of face masks—something which is in itself significant in relation to the question of the (dubious) scientific nature of the approach that he favours. This is clearly apparent from the following incongruities (Mercola 2021):

> … in March 2020, Dr Anthony Fauci stated that "people should not be walking around with masks because it's not providing the perfect protection that people think that it is." Logically, only symptomatic individuals and health care workers were urged to wear them.
>
> Fauci even pointed out that mask wearing has "unintended consequences" as "people keep fiddling with their mask and they keep touching their face," which may actually increase the risk of contracting and/or spreading the virus …

> By July 2020, Fauci claimed his initial dismissal of face masks had been in error and that he'd downplayed their importance simply to ensure there would be a sufficient supply for health care workers, who need them most.
>
> Fast-forward a few weeks, and by the end of July 2020, Fauci went to the next extreme, flouting the recommendation to wear goggles and full face shields in addition to a mask, ostensibly because the mucous membranes of your eyes could potentially serve as entryways for viruses as well.

This inconsistency, which did not prevent mask-wearing from becoming mandatory in most countries (Sweden being the most notable exception), is itself a symptom of the hegemonic status of mainstream media information, in so far as it shows how the later positions adopted by Fauci were readily adopted by the mask-wearing public at large without question or complaint concerning his communicational inconsistencies. Related to the fact that Fauci's vacillations have always been carried by the mainstream media, the astonishing extent to which the media have become hegemonic is captured succinctly by Irish film producer Ivor Cummins in the film, *Covid Chronicles* (Cummins and O'Neill 2021) where he remarks (Vimeo, Covid Chronicles 1: 13): *"A key thing to remember, I think, is if you turned off the media, no one would know there's an epidemic. Even during the surges in Ireland, in both seasons, if you did not have access to the media, you would never know."* Hence, in a very real sense, the coronavirus "pandemic" may be dubbed a "media pandemic."

That is not all there is to the role of the media in the fraught "infosphere" of the "pandemic." Scrutiny of some examples of media communication regarding different aspects of Covid-19 shows that information in mainstream media overwhelmingly leans in the direction of stressing the severity of the "illness" and of the urgency of following the WHO and especially Dr Fauci's advice on lockdowns and all they entail, as well as [on] the advisability of (adults as well as children) being "vaccinated." This is not surprising, given the prominence that Fauci's pronouncements have enjoyed in the media (e.g., Higgins-Dunn 2021; Stinchcombe 2021; Todd 2021), which has given rise to his veritable beatification. Fauci took full advantage of this, as Robert Kennedy (2021, 28) eloquently describes:

> Dr Fauci encouraged his own canonization and the disturbing inquisition against his blasphemous critics. In a June 9, 2021 *je suis l'état* interview, he pronounced that Americans who questioned his statements were, per se, anti-science. "Attacks on me," he explained, "quite frankly, are attacks on science."

Needless to say, of course—and as Kennedy (2021, 26–29, 55) points out—one person's supposedly "scientific" pronouncements are never a guarantee that they are scientifically validated; particularly in the sciences vigorous debates about scientific claims and theories are the rule, not the exception. But in Fauci's case the views he (together with the CDC and the WHO) has promoted were rapidly elevated to the level of dogma, which has no place in science. When the president of America (Joe Biden)

encourages people to "trust the experts" (Kennedy 2021, 55), ordinary people—who know little of how science functions—have little, if any, defence against such spurious advice. Recently (16 December 2021), keeping in mind the weight that official, televised presidential communications with a country's citizens usually carry, President Biden issued another ostensibly authoritative statement on Covid "vaccines" and "boosters" when he announced (The White House 2021):

> For unvaccinated, we are looking at a winter of severe illness and death—if you're unvaccinated—for themselves, their families, and the hospitals they'll soon overwhelm.
>
> But there's good news: If you're vaccinated and you had your booster shot, you're protected from severe illness and death—period.
>
> Number two, booster shots work.
>
> Three, boosters are free, safe, and convenient.

Previously, in July 2021, Biden (CNN 2021) had stated even more confidently that "This is a simple, basic proposition: If you're vaccinated, you're not going to be hospitalized, you're not going to be in an ICU unit, and you're not going to die." Despite his confident ("rationalist") claims regarding the efficacy and safety of the "vaccines" there are numerous ("empiricist") claims to the contrary, sometimes backed up by appeals to some of the registers of adverse effects to the "vaccines" including the American system known as VAERS. Even an ostensibly neutral "fact-checking" agency like the Poynter Institute's *Politifact* (Sherman 2021) rated Biden's sweeping statement of 21 July (CNN 2021) as "half true." Sherman writes that "President Joe Biden exaggerated when he spoke about the effectiveness of the Covid-19 vaccine during a CNN town hall event. 'You're not going to get Covid if you have these vaccinations,' Biden said." The fact that Sherman proceeds to draw mainly on CDC information, which stresses that it is a relatively small number of people who suffer "rare" adverse effects post-"vaccination" without even consulting other sources of information (not even the VAERS registry, where adverse vaccine events are notoriously under-reported), shows that she may not be as "neutral" as she appears to be. The reason for this is that consulting other, alternative (non-mainstream) reports on adverse "vaccine" events disabuses one quickly of the belief promoted by Sherman (2021) that "… hospitalizations and deaths among vaccinated people are extremely rare." For example, on 5 January 2022, an article titled "Covid Vaccine Scientific Proof Lethal" was published on the Saveusnow website (but may be removed at any time by the representatives of the official narrative). The article opens with the statement:

> **Over One Thousand Scientific Studies Prove That the Covid-19 Vaccines Are dangerous, and All Those Pushing This Agenda Are Committing the Indictable Crime of Gross Misconduct in Public Office** [Bold in original; BO]. (Saveusnow 2022)

The piece continues by referring to the recent change in the use of the term "vaccine" to incorporate an "illegal, unlawful medical experiment to facilitate the usage of mRNA technology that is demonstrably not a vaccine, and which contains biologically toxic nano-metamaterials associated with 5G urban data gathering capability." (The vexed question of 5G technology will not be pursued here.) The topics covered in the 1011 articles, the links to which are supplied, cover numerous adverse "vaccine" events such as cerebral venous thrombosis, fatal cerebral haemorrhage, myocarditis, acute venous thromboembolism, portal vein thrombosis and many other cases of thrombosis and thrombocytopenia. In the light of these studies, the authors remark that:

> The "safe and effective" false propaganda, put out by public officials who now are continuing to push this vaccine, is a clear breach of duty. A public office holder is subject to, and aware of, a duty to prevent death or serious injury that arises only by virtue of the functions of the public office.
>
> Many have breached that duty and, in doing so, are recklessly causing a risk of death or serious injury, by carrying on regardless of the now-confirmed dangers associated with Covid-19 injections. Some of these risks are **blood clotting, myocarditis, pericarditis, thrombosis, thrombocytopenia, anaphylaxis, Bell's palsy, Guillain-Barre, cancer including deaths**, etc. [Bold in original; BO] (Saveusnow 2022)

Hence, if one is willing to look beyond all the "legacy" media for information on these matters, it may surprise one to find a plethora of information that contradicts the pre-programmed, repetitive mantras concerning Covid dogmas encountered in mainstream media—including (improbably, one might think) Pope Francis's recent call for people to be "vaccinated" calling it a "moral obligation" and encouraging people to demonstrate "respect for the health" of other people (RT 2022). Clearly, either the Pope is turning a blind eye to contrary information about the effects of the "vaccines" or he is simply uninformed—which millions of people across the world are because they rely exclusively on hyper-programmed mainstream media and on those organisations that drive the official narrative, such as the WHO and the CDC in the United States. Regarding the "safety" of Covid-19 "vaccines" on its website the "authoritative" WHO, for example, states categorically that:

> There are strict precautions in place to help ensure the safety of all Covid-19 vaccines. Before receiving validation from WHO and national regulatory agencies for emergency use, Covid-19 vaccines must undergo rigorous testing in clinical trials to prove that they meet internationally agreed benchmarks for safety and efficacy.
>
> Unprecedented scientific collaborations have allowed Covid-19 vaccine research, development, and authorizations to be completed in record time—to meet the urgent need for these vaccines while maintaining high safety standards. As with all vaccines, WHO and regulatory authorities will continuously monitor the use of Covid-19 vaccines to identify and respond to any safety issues that might arise. Through that process, we ascertain that they remain safe for use around the world. (WHO 2021)

These assurances by the WHO on the record-breaking timeline of Covid-19 "vaccine" development (previously it took years to develop a vaccine; these so-called "vaccines" were "developed" in a matter of months) have been "mechanically" repeated by many agencies since their first release for being administered to people. In Derridean language, it is as if the reassurance that the "vaccines" are "safe and effective" has been hyper-pre-programmed for continuous, frequent repetition, offering a confident "yes" to any inquiry after their safety and efficacy, to the point of anticipating such inquiries and proffering the "yes" even before any questions are asked. Instances of such pre-programmed information or communication affirming the "safety and effectiveness" of the Covid-19 "vaccines" are mostly encountered in the popular media, from newspapers to television and radio, but are also found in more specialised media spaces, such as medical journals, for example (see Kaplan and Milstein 2021; Sharfstein, Callaghan et al. 2021). Related to this, in late 2021 South African media reported the exhortation by the state president, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, that citizens should get vaccinated against Covid-19. Some, like News24, even published his open letter to South African citizens. Referring to the "4th wave" of Covid infections, by the so-called "Omicron variant" Ramaphosa repeated the official mantra in a manner similar to what he routinely says on television (Ramaphosa 2021):

> South Africa now has sufficient supplies of vaccines and we have vaccine stations set up in every part of the country. As every day passes, and as infections rise, the reasons to get vaccinated become more compelling and the need becomes ever more urgent.
>
> Vaccines are safe, and like all other routine vaccinations we received as children and against diseases like measles, they offer the most potent form of protection available.
>
> Vaccination is essential for our economic recovery, because as more people are vaccinated more areas of economic activity will be opened up. We can do our work and socialise under less stringent restrictions, and our lives can return to some degree of normality.

Ramaphosa here presses all the communicational buttons designed to make "unvaccinated" citizens feel guilty about their "vaccine" status, such as supposedly being responsible for the rise in infections and delaying the recovery of the economy. This is part and parcel of the pre-programmed, mechanically repetitive "yes" of the pro-"vaccination" narrative, of which there are many other examples on Ramaphosa's part, such as the report on his "vaccine charm offensive" in July 2021, when news surfaced of a study that found many South Africans believed prayer to be more effective against Covid-19 than vaccines to prevent infection (*Times Live* 2021).

The pre-programmed "yes" regarding putative "vaccine efficacy" is not always as straightforward as the examples above suggest. Sometimes it comes with a twist, in light of what mainstream representatives perceive as possible negative impressions regarding "vaccine" effectiveness and safety. In an article significantly titled "Why the latest Covid Death Data Is not all it Seems," Rachel Moss (2021) argues that a conspicuous

rise in Covid deaths in Britain (early September 2021) is partly explicable by "delayed reporting" and partly by public ignorance of the way "vaccines" work. She writes (Moss 2021):

> Despite high vaccine uptake, there will inevitably continue to be some deaths linked to Covid-19, adds Dr Julian Tang, who's a consultant virologist and honorary associate professor of respiratory sciences at the University of Leicester. This is because no vaccine is 100% effective.
>
> "There seems to be a misunderstanding that whilst vaccines appear to work well at a population level—e.g., 90% protection against severe disease and death—that this does not translate to protection for everyone at an individual level, e.g., if 50 million people are now fully vaccinated, 10% (five million) might still experience more severe disease and death," he tells HuffPost UK.
>
> With most people being vaccinated now, those being admitted and dying are most likely to be those already vaccinated.

It will be noted that the pre-programmed "yes" regarding vaccine efficacy in this excerpt seems to be toned down somewhat, but it resonates with the "fact-checking" findings of Sherman (2021) referred to earlier, which asserted that Joe Biden's assurances regarding the safety and effectiveness of the Covid vaccines were "exaggerated" but he nevertheless repeated the mantra that adverse events among the "vaccinated" were "extremely rare." In other words, the vaccines are, by implication, *comparatively* "safe and effective"—which essentially represents the same, if slightly muted, mechanical repetition of the pre-programmed "yes" regarding the mainstream imperative to "take the vaccine."

Signatures, "Counter-signatures": Two Types of Economy and two Kinds of Laughter

One has to keep in mind that the very same thing which makes this mainstream media hegemony—reflected in the discussion above—possible, however, namely the Internet, also allows alternative news sources to circulate censored news and critical opinion. It should already be apparent from references to some such alternative sources of information (notably Saveusnow 2022) that, compared to the hyper-pre-programmed "yes"-signature encountered in the mainstream media and other sources of the "official narrative" a different response or "counter-signature" is possible—one that does not simply mechanically repeat the pre-programmed "yes" regarding orthodox information concerning, for example, "vaccine safety." In Derridean terms, the latter instantiates an exemplary instance of a *mechanical* repetition of the "yes" on a global scale. In other words, instead of affirming the "message" concerning supposed "vaccine safety" transmitted by the orthodox media, in such a way as to demonstrate that one's response is a "genuine" *counter-signature* (Derrida 1991, 580)—that is, a "repetition" that

testifies to having understood the message, and in responding augmenting it with one's own singular voice or action—it is simply repeated unreflectively. As demonstrated above this amounts first to the "programmed" *messages* of those who drive the mainstream narrative, which all amount to the same thing, regardless of the questions directed at them—even where Fauci's and the media's "answers" have changed regarding mask-wearing or the "vaccines"—the gist has remained the "same" namely that they are "safe and effective." Secondly, considering the large percentages of (fully) "vaccinated" people in First World countries (see Holder 2022 for country-coded global map), it pertains to the ostensibly equally "mechanically programmed" affirmative *responses* by the receivers of these messages, that is, the public at large, in the guise of *taking* the "vaccines."

The question may,, therefore be raised, analogous to Derrida's claim regarding the difficulty, if not impossibility, of responding with a unique "counter-signature" to the ostensibly exhaustively pre-programmed Joycean text, whether (first) a differently programmed "message" concerning the "pandemic"—specifically "vaccines"—is possible, and (second) whether such a message, as well as a refusal of the "vaccines" constitutes an alternative, a "counter-signature," to the pre-programmed official narrative. Such a possibility is clarified by Derrida's distinction between two types of "laughter." According to Derrida, as far as the "inside" of the text is concerned, where "… nothing new can take you by surprise …" it is nevertheless true that "you also have the feeling that something might eventually happen to you from an unforseeable [sic] outside. And you have guests" (Derrida 1991, 581). The "outside" in question is a general "economy of excess" and the "guests" in question include "non-Joycean" scholars such as Derrida (a philosopher) from whom "new counter-signatures" to a canonical literary text like *Ulysses* may appear. In other words, a "yes" which has *not* been internally pre-programmed, is *also* always possible.

It is important to grasp precisely what the "general economy"—according to which communicational contributions from the "outside" function—amounts to, in so far as "counter-signatures" from a communicational sphere "exterior" to the interiority of mainstream Covid-19 orthodoxy would also necessarily be phrased in terms of such a "general economy" of meaning and action. On the one hand, Derrida (1978) identifies a "restricted economy" (of what one might call "insemination") where every investment is made for the sake of a return—such as the Hegelian dialectic, where "sublation" guarantees the simultaneous preservation, cancellation and upliftment or elevation of every preceding historical development. On the other hand, there is a "general economy" of excess or dissemination, loss, amnesia and of the "gift" without return (profit)—in other words, where there is no reserve and no anticipated or predicted returns, and where meaning is always already "ruined" subject to entropy and exposed to the unexpected. In the absence of unpredictable "excess" the "signatures" of, as well as "counter-signatures" to the pre-programmed "yes" (that is, imperatives) of the official Covid narrative belong to a "restricted economy" while the novel "counter-signatures" to this pre-programmed "yes" necessarily issuing from an "exterior," not

subject to the investment of the official narrative and mainstream media, participate in a general economy of excess and dissemination.

Returning to contrasting responses to the technologically pre-programmed "yes," Derrida connects two types of laughter that he detects in Joyce's *Ulysses* with the "yes" of repetition and the question of signatures. First, one may hear a "reactive, even a negative, yes-laughter … resonate" (Derrida 1991, 587). The defiantly triumphant tonality of this laughter suggests that a certain pleasure is derived from the hypermnesic omniscience embodied in *Ulysses*, given its omnipotence in the face of the fruitless attempts to challenge its mastery. This "reactive laughter" marks a restricted economy, a laughter of debt to Joyce's text, for every act of interpretation finds itself already indebted to Joyce's literary-semiotic investments, outwitted in advance by the textural-textual *accoutrements* woven by his formidable hypertext. But secondly, Derrida also detects a yes-laughter with a different tonality in *Ulysses*, a "… yes-laughter of a gift without debt, the light almost amnesic, affirmation, of a gift or an abandoned event …" (1991, 589).

Succinctly put, Derrida intimates that, alongside the laughter of indebtedness, investment and return, there is the general abandonment-economy or hilarity of entropy, of excess, of the gift without return, of the unexpected arrival of the *other* or the unforeseeable *event*. This is so unexpected that not even the most exhaustive, algorithmically calibrated technological instruments or mega-programmes of control ever devised could insert themselves into the not-yet of the unknown future to greet it with a knowing, anticipating "yes" that would duplicate its tonality in advance with hyper-technological precision. This requires one, Derrida insists, "… to try to think the singularity of the event, and therefore the uniqueness of the signature …" (1991, 589). What this implies is that, only if one's "yes" is *really* a "yes" will human beings be able to honour the singular or the *particular* alongside the *universal* in communication, language and thought. Only in this way could the novel counter-signing event of interpretation or communication be inaugurated, even as one unavoidably always faces the risk of failing, by being caught in the pre-programming web of hyper-communication and -information.

Analogous to Derrida's distinction between two types of laughter encountered in Joyce's *Ulysses*, the same distinction applies to information and communication in general, as well as in the context of the "pandemic" with particular focus on "vaccines" communication. The first type of laughter discussed above—contemptuous, sardonic; the laughter of debt and investment for the sake of return—communicates to the interlocutor the implication that this omni-programmed, hypermnesic and absolutely circumnavigating message (the first type of "yes") has always already anticipated any and all possible responses and interpretations, leaving the interlocutor helpless, impotent before its overawing, ostensibly authoritative countenance. One need only think of the impression of the "authority" that emanates from Dr Fauci, the CDC and the WHO to understand how this debt-laughter—which accompanies their

"authoritative" statements—operates in the official narrative: "you owe us!" A concomitant phenomenon has been that in the United States a veritable cult has grown up around Fauci, with paraphernalia like Fauci dolls and coffee mugs popping up like Covid-fetishes everywhere (Kennedy 2021, 27).

As may be expected, the second type of laughter has a different tonality, that of excess, of the "gift" without reserve. This leaves open the door and invites "unanticipated" responses in the spirit of Heraclitus's well-known, paradoxical aphorism: "Expect the unexpected." What this suggests is that even the most over-invested text or message, regardless of its hyper-signifying communicational capacity to have pre-empted every possible interpretive response, *is subject to "external" historically new contexts*. Within the totality of its own meaning- or sign-structure it is bound to come across "other" responses precisely because this structure cannot be limited to a definite set of meanings, absolutely and conclusively circumscribed or circumnavigated like Odysseus' interior, circular journey of homecoming in *The Odyssey* or in *Ulysses*. As Derrida (1982; see also Olivier 2009 and 2020) shows elsewhere, a "context" is not "saturable"—in the sense that when something (say, Einstein's general relativity-theoretical formula for energy ($E = mc^2$) were to be reinscribed in new contexts (as it has been; Bodanis 2001; see also Olivier 2009), it would *not* "lose" its original meaning, *but* this would be indefinitely augmented or enriched by other meanings. Paradoxically, it would retain its "original" meaning *and* be modified simultaneously. As Derrida puts it, in "Signature event context":

> … are the prerequisites of a context ever absolutely determinable? … Is there a rigorous and scientific concept of the *context*? Does not the notion of context harbor, behind a certain confusion, very determined philosophical presuppositions? To state it now in the most summary fashion, I would like to demonstrate why a context is never absolutely determinable, or rather in what way its determination is never certain or saturated. (Derrida 1982, 310)

Similarly, regardless of the extent to which Joyce's text, *Ulysses*, or the equally hyper-pre-programmed techno-messages of the official, mainstream Covid-narrative anticipate any and all interpretive responses as *mechanically-repeating responses*—seen in the context of its own capacity to draw such responses into the interiority of its own hyper-programmed domain—this does not rule out the possibility of an exterior, historically or spatio-temporally modified context within which its messages and the responses to them may be reinscribed. This is possible because of what Derrida calls the non-saturability of contexts.

This way of understanding the aporia with which Joyce confronts the literary critic, as uncovered by Derrida, therefore provides a parallel way of understanding the aporia of communication in the global space of the "pandemic." On the one hand the mainstream sources of information have always already adopted the stance of the first kind of laughter, predicated on the belief that nothing you could say in response would surprise them. They always "know" what to expect, are always one step ahead of you, making

the communication of "relevant" information a pre-programmed monologue instead of a dialogue. On the other hand, however, they cannot deny the possibility that the recipients of their messages may come up with something completely unexpected, even disconcerting. To this extent their communicative stance unavoidably, willy-nilly, and unintentionally corresponds to the second type of laughter, of the "gift" without reserve, laying the groundwork for a comparable "gift"-response on the part of the recipients of their messages—that is, responses that do not simply repeat, mechanically, the pre-programmed responses built into the mainstream information-machine, but instead consist of responses that repeat and re-programme the initial messages differently, accompanied by the second type of excess-laughter.

The upshot of Derrida's deconstructive analysis is that it is impossible to choose in a determinative manner between these two possibilities; the one always haunts the other like its shadow, always enabling and disenabling it simultaneously. It follows, therefore, that information-communication is *and* simultaneously is not possible as something that can be controlled by means of hyper-pre-programming. This is true of all communication and interpretation, including that which occurs in the sphere of the "pandemic" and, therefore, explains how interpretations of mainstream Covid-information can be understood *differently* compared to the mechanical "repetition of the same" on the part of people who affirm these pre-programmed messages.

Repeating differently in Response to the Pre-programmed "yes" in Pandemic Space

It will be clear by now that, given the veritable iatrarchy ("rule by physicians") and what may be termed "pharmocracy" ("rule of pharmaceutical corporations") under which the world has been labouring for approximately the past two years, I have chosen to focus mainly on the issue of "vaccines" in relation to which the theme of two types of responses to the orthodox approach is explored. One has already seen instances (including from Dr Fauci and the WHO) of the pre-programming hyper-machine of the official narrative insisting on the "efficacy and safety" of the "vaccines." This hyper-machine comprises the mainstream media, where ne'er a criticism or unambiguously negative comment about Covid "vaccines" is allowed. I leave it to readers to guess why this is the case. For such adverse criticism of "vaccines" one has to turn to non-mainstream media and platforms, some of which I have listed elsewhere (e.g., Olivier 2021). Moreover, a veritable army of so-called "fact-checkers" are employed by purveyors of the official narrative to repudiate reports and arguments, even when supported by evidence, that they find in alternative media. Take the example of *The British Medical Journal* (BMJ), which published a feature article questioning the data integrity of Pfizer Pharmaceutical company's Covid "vaccine" trial in fairly damning terms (Thacker 2021). In response, "fact-checkers" dismissed the article. As Joseph Mercola (2022a) notes:

> In early November 2021, The BMJ published a whistleblower report that claimed there were serious data integrity issues in the Pfizer Covid jab trial. The article was censored by Facebook and labeled variably as either "False," "Partly false" or "Missing context." Some users reported the article could not be shared at all.
>
> The Facebook fact check of The BMJ article was done by Lead Stories, a Facebook contractor. The headline of its "fact check" rebuttal read: "Fact Check: The British Medical Journal Did NOT Reveal Disqualifying and Ignored Reports of Flaws in Pfizer's Covid-19 Vaccine Trials" …
>
> In response, The BMJ has slammed the fact check, calling it "inaccurate, incompetent and irresponsible." In an open letter[1] addressed to Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, The BMJ urges Zuckerberg to "act swiftly" to correct the erroneous fact check, review the processes that allowed it to occur in the first place, and "generally to reconsider your investment in and approach to fact checking overall."

In light of the above it is interesting to note that, in 2020, Facebook was taken to court by a journalist, John Stossel, after its fact-checkers rejected Stossel's published interviews with authorities who claimed that climate change was not a major factor in the California forest fires of 2020. Mercola (2022a) comments:

> "Fact checks" are nothing but a biased censoring mechanism, and now we have proof of this fact, thanks to a lawsuit brought against Facebook by journalist John Stossel.
>
> In court documents, Facebook admits that fact checks are "statements of opinion" and not factual assertions.

So much for "fact-checking"—at least by the fact-checkers working for Facebook (recently confusingly re-named "Meta")—which has therefore been exposed as no more than "correct (sanctioned) opinion" or "ortho-doxa." Alternative media are precisely those that subvert such orthodoxy in the interest of society at large, which would otherwise be at the mercy of the one-sided mainstream media. So, for example, I could not find a reference in the mainstream media (CNN, BBC, ABC, Al Jazeera and so on) to the important (and telling) open letter written to the Israeli Ministry of Health by Professor Ehud Qimron, head of the department of immunology and microbiology at Tel Aviv University, declaring openly that it was time for the ministry to "admit failure" in its handling of the Covid-19 "pandemic" (Charbonneau 2022; the letter can be read in its entirety here). Among other damning statements, Qimron writes (Charbonneau 2022):

> You refused to admit that recovery is more protective than a vaccine, despite previous knowledge and observations showing that non-recovered vaccinated people are more likely to be infected than recovered people.

> You refused to admit that the vaccinated are contagious despite the observations. Based on this, you hoped to achieve herd immunity by vaccination—and you failed in that as well.
>
> You insisted on ignoring the fact that the disease is dozens of times more dangerous for risk groups and older adults than for young people who are not in risk groups, despite the knowledge that came from China as early as 2020.
>
> You refused to adopt the "Barrington Declaration" signed by more than 60 000 scientists and medical professionals, or other common-sense programs.
>
> You chose to ridicule, slander, distort and discredit them. Instead of the right programs and people, you have chosen professionals who lack relevant training for pandemic management (physicists as chief government advisers, veterinarians, security officers, media personnel, and so on).
>
> You have not set up an effective system for reporting side effects from the vaccines, and reports on side effects have even been deleted from your Facebook page. Doctors avoid linking side effects to the vaccine, lest you persecute them as you did with some of their colleagues.

This open letter is immensely significant—as an instance of a response to the official narrative, "repeating differently" in its singular counter-signature, accompanied by the laughter of excess and the gift—considering that the mainstream has regarded Israel as exemplary in its response to Covid, largely because of being among the most "vaccinated" nations on the planet. As Charbonneau (2022) further points out, instead of listening to scientists and doctors without vested interests, the Israel health ministry colluded with executives from Pfizer—which supplied all the "vaccines" administered to Israeli citizens—to (mis-)inform Israelis about the putative "effectiveness and safety" of the vaccines. The result has been that the vast majority of people recently hospitalised with Covid-19 in Israel are those who have been "fully vaccinated" (Carbajal 2021)—a clear testimony to the mendacity of the Israeli government regarding the effectiveness of the "jabs." This is mirrored elsewhere in the world in some non-mainstream media, albeit sometimes with a virtue-signalling orthodox rider, that the efficacy of the "vaccines" should not be doubted despite "vaccinated" people falling ill with Covid and dying. So, for instance, Kit Yates observes (rather counter-intuitively) that:

> The fact that more vaccinated people are dying than unvaccinated people, or that a higher proportion of people in hospital with covid have been vaccinated than we might expect, does nothing to undermine vaccine safety or effectiveness. In fact, it's exactly what we'd expect from the excellent vaccines that have already saved hundreds of thousands of lives around the world. (Yates 2021)

In brief, Yates attributes the higher hospitalisation and death rate among the "vaccinated" mainly to the high "vaccination" rate in the United Kingdom (around 90% for adult recipients of at least one dose), particularly among older people, in this way

side-stepping the obvious truth, that these "vaccines" are decidedly not "effective" (ignoring their vaunted "safety" for the moment) in the same way that authentic vaccines are, which function by preventing infection by a pathogen as well as precluding spreading it further. This example demonstrates that *non*-mainstream media need not always run counter to mainstream media regarding the way in which the message of the latter is repeated; Yates's article represents a mechanical repetition of the pre-programmed "yes" of the orthodox message, accompanied by the first kind of "laughter" listed above, signifying mainstream media's sardonic confidence that nothing genuinely new can be expected from someone who responds to their "yes"-message. By contrast, the open letter by Israeli professor Qimron represents a novel kind of repetition, one of "repeating differently" the message of the mainstream; instead of a mechanical repetition of its pre-programmed message, Qimron offers a response that signifies the second kind of laughter—the laughter of excess, of the gift without return, and of the general economy of meaning that breaks out of the straitjacket of orthodoxy's restricted economy of investment and return. Such a response is recognisable by its (perhaps unexpected) deviation from the official script, instead presenting listeners or readers with a novel angle of incidence—one that broadens the field of communicational possibilities.

Needless to emphasise, there are more radical instances of the "laughter of excess" that gifts its audience with unheard-of communicational excesses. On the topic of the "vaccines" one (among several) such "gift(s) without return" concerns the question of what the so-called "vaccines" consist of. It is a video in which a German doctor, Dr Andreas Noack, explains that the Pfizer Covid "vaccine" does not contain graphene oxide (that produces immunity-destructive protein spikes in the human body), as other people who have examined it claim, but graphene hydroxide, which is even worse for the body, given its nano-particle structure which resembles sub-microscopic razor blades (Noack 2021). Dr Noack was a rare specialist on the topic of carbon and was evidently murdered by German police four days after he posted the video on BitChute, probably because, given his expertise, he was virtually unique in his ability to testify in court against the official narrative (see Ahlawat 2021). In the video he describes graphene hydroxide as a "mono-layered activated carbon" whose "electrons are delocalised (fully mobile)" and are "not biologically decomposable." "These nanoscale structures" he says further:

> … can best be described as razor blades." [It] suspends well in water. … So these are razor blades spread homogeneously in the liquid. This is basically Russian roulette … It cuts the blood vessels. The blood vessels have epithel cells as their inner lining. The epithel is extremely smooth, like a mirror. And it is cut up by these razor blades. That's what's so dangerous. If you inject the vaccine into a vein, the razors will circulate in the blood and cut up the epithel … The mean thing is that toxicological tests are done in Petri dishes. And there you will not find anything … If you perform an autopsy on the victims, you will not find anything … People bleed to death on the inside … Especially the top athletes who are dropping dead have fast-flowing blood. The faster the blood flows the more damage the razors will do. As a chemist, if you inject this into the blood,

> you know you are a murderer. It's a new material, toxicologists are not aware of it yet. Suddenly it makes sense that … top athletes with high blood circulation, completely healthy, suddenly drop dead [4.51 minutes into the video; BO].

Hence, what Dr Noack has so eloquently exposed—in the guise of repeating differently, and unexpectedly, the "gift-yes" of the pre-programmed message—is that, when graphene hydroxide is injected into a person's body, and one is unfortunate enough to have it injected into a vein or artery by chance (hence the "Russian roulette"), nanoscale razor blades will circulate in the bigger vessels of your cardiovascular system and destroy them as well as your heart. I am not sure whether they can enter the smaller blood vessels, but given their extremely small scale and the fact that the cardiovascular system is a closed system, I would guess that they can. At any rate, the reason why Noack alludes to "top athletes … dropping dead" on the sports field is because, around the time of his tragic death, there was a spate of such sudden deaths, which the mainstream tried to explain away as being extremely "rare" (Reuters 2021), but which were obviously—in light of Dr Noack's research—an effect of the graphene hydroxide in their blood. Nevertheless, the media could not avoid reporting this conspicuous wave of unexpected deaths on sports fields (Team East Mojo 2021). An interesting reference to Dr Noack's research and to his untimely death at the hands of German police, is found in Dr Mercola's (2022b) work—discussed below—on a lawsuit recently filed at the ICC against members of the mainstream cabal. Here, Dr Mercola (2022b) quotes from the court documents, where the court is informed about Dr Noack's research (italics in original): "*We request a full investigation be done into the inclusion of Graphene hydroxide in the Covid-19 'vaccines' and into the assassination of Dr Andreas Noack.*"

In an alternative news source—an e-mail message from Bruce Foster (2021; see also *The Clockwork Orange Times* 2021, on which Foster's e-mail is based) to the State of Ohio, however, the spate of sudden deaths among sports stars (on the sports field) is not simply reported, but critically questioned, in contrast to mainstream media's deadpan reporting of these incidents as if they are nothing unusual, and sometimes insisting that they are wholly unrelated to being "vaccinated" (for example Wheeler 2021 and Reuters 2021). Very appositely, Foster (2021) writes:

> The reports of athletes who suddenly collapse have been increasing noticeably lately. Heart problems such as heart inflammation are often the cause—one of the known life-threatening side effects of Covid vaccines, which even the manufacturers themselves warn against.

Foster adds pointedly that "The mainstream media is curiously uninterested in this major global story." It is not difficult to understand why this is the case—if the orthodox media were to admit that there is a direct link between being "vaccinated" and players suddenly dying on sports fields, engaged in high energy-consuming, intensive activity, it would not be sticking to the pre-programmed repetition of the orthodox script, and entail an obvious slippage of the mask. And one has seen, in Dr Noack's penetrating insight (above) into the mechanism of graphene hydroxide (contained in the Pfizer

vaccine) in human veins and arteries, particularly of sports stars who routinely participate in rigorous physical activity, precisely why such deaths due to cardiac arrest occur at a rate *far* above the normal. Hence, resonating with the second type of laughter, of excess and the gift without return—heard in Dr Noack's video—Foster's e-mail message similarly sounds the alarm regarding the misleading, dull repetition of mainstream media's spurious assurances that the "vaccines" are "safe and effective." Clearly, they are *not*, and anyone with a modicum of the capacity to think and act critically would unavoidably ask the question: *Why* is this pre-programmed, cynical repetition of a misleading reassurance still occurring? (Unfortunately answering this question would take me too far from the focus of this article; it will have to wait for a future occasion.)

Notably, in late January 2022 an event occurred that has, conspicuously and for obvious reasons, *not* been reported anywhere in mainstream media, as far as I have been able to confirm, although (in video-format) it has been circulating on platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal for some time now. As reported by Dr Mercola (2022b) on his alternative news website on 22 January, this is the occurrence of a major lawsuit, comprising 46 pages, being lodged by attorney Hannah Rose and seven people at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, against 16 individuals driving the mainstream narrative. Dr Mercola (2022b) summarises the article as follows:

> Seven applicants, on behalf of the British population, have filed a complaint with the International Criminal Court (ICC), accusing 16 individuals of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression
>
> The 16 defendants include Dr Anthony Fauci, Dr Peter Daszak, Bill and Melinda Gates, the CEOs of Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson, U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson along with several other British authorities, as well as the presidents of the Rockefeller Foundation and the World Economic Forum
>
> According to the ICC complaint, the 16 defendants have violated the Nuremberg Code and Articles 6, 7, 8, 15, 21 and 53 of the Rome Statute
>
> The Nuremberg Code is a set of medical research ethics principles that grew out of the "Doctors Trial" in Nuremberg following World War II. The war crimes tribunal at Nuremberg established 10 standards to which doctors must conform when performing experiments on human subjects
>
> The ICC is a permanent, independent court that investigates crimes that concern the international community. Its activities are governed by an international treaty called the Rome Statute, which has been ratified by more than 120 countries, including the U.S. It can step in when a member state fails to take appropriate action to bring a criminal to justice. In theory, member states are supposed to cooperate with the court

It should be glaringly obvious that Dr Mercola's reporting on this *major* event happening about two years after the start of the so-called "pandemic" constitutes an

exemplary instance of what Derrida terms the "laughter of the gift without return" in so far as the seven people who lodged the case with the ICC (including Dr Mike Yeadon, former vice-president of Pfizer, and a leader in the resistance against the powerful mainstream narrative) have demonstrated that it is indeed humanly possible to go beyond the mechanical mainstream pre-programming that supposedly limits the responses of interlocutors to the pre-programmed options. Dr Mercola's report is based largely, but not exclusively, on a previous report in *The Desert Times* (Hope 2021), which must, therefore, be credited with sounding the "laughter of excess and of the gift" even earlier than Dr Mercola, although the information in these two respective publications is not identical, with the result that they complement each other significantly. (I should point out that, because Dr Mercola is regarded by the (compromised) Biden administration as public enemy number one as far as [supposed] Covid-19 "misinformation" goes, articles on his website are taken down after 48 hours; if any reader would like to read his censored work, referred to here by myself, they can write to me by e-mail and I shall gladly send the documents, which I have downloaded, to them. The article in the alternative news source, *The Desert Review* [Hope 2021], which also lists other news outlets that have run the story, should be readily available, though.)

There are too many other instances—far too many to do justice to here—representing both mainstream and alternative information and communication concerning different aspects of the "pandemic," notably of the "vaccines," to be included within the limited space of this academic article. I believe that the ones I have listed and discussed (in terms of Derrida's deconstructive analysis of "communication" and the "yes") are representative, however.

An important recent Development in the "War of Information"

At this point a brief consideration of the contemporary "war of information" (which is also a "bio-weapon war") that is being waged right under people's noses, is called for, with many (probably most) of them being blissfully unaware that this is indeed a *war* in every sense of the word, with thousands (possibly millions) of casualties (most of them disguised as Covid deaths) accumulating among ordinary people. In fact, given its geographic and demographic range or enormity, it might be dubbed World War 3.

In his review of the VAERS adverse reaction system in the United States, Dr Mercola (2022c)—drawing on the research of Dr Jessica Rose—remarks that: "The estimated underreporting factor for Covid jab injuries in VAERS is between 31 and 100, so the actual death toll in the U.S. could be anywhere from 278 500 to 898 600." Moreover, "VAERS data are being deleted without explanation. Each week, about 100 or so reports are routinely deleted, so there are now thousands of inexplicably missing reports." This suggests that the death toll may be even higher than the underreporting factor suggests. The mind-boggling thing about this is that, unless you read and listen to the relatively small group of researchers such as Dr Mercola, Dr Rose, Robert Kennedy Jr, Tessa

Lena, Kevin Annett, Dr Reiner Fuellmich, Dr Peter McCullough, Dr Robert Malone, Dr Sherri Tenpenny and Dr Pierre Kory, you would probably live in the fool's paradise where everything seems to be hunky-dory as far as the "pandemic" goes. This is particularly so since the recent appearance of the comparatively mild, so-called "Omicron" variant of the "novel coronavirus" that some see as a signal that one is witnessing the tapering-off of the "pandemic." Small wonder one is witnessing a veritable Lyotardian "*differend*" in the world today (Olivier 2021), where there is a global chasm between the relatively few (who have been increasing in number lately), who are aware of the enormity of a global *coup d'etat* occurring, as if in virtual reality—created by the mainstream mass media—on the one hand, and the majority, who dismiss any suggestion that this is the case as a mere "conspiracy theory."

And talking about virtual reality, perhaps one cannot blame them too much; think of the plot of the science fiction film directed by the Wachowskis (when they were still twin brothers, and not transgender sisters)—*The Matrix* (Wachowski and Wachowski 1999)—where people unwittingly live in pods and experience the world as virtual reality, attached to a system which literally uses their physical energy to operate, until one of them (a messianic figure called Neo, played by Keanu Reeves) is freed by a character called Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne) and made aware of the virtual imprisonment of the human race. The present situation bears an uncanny resemblance to the narrative of *The Matrix* (and its sequels).

To illustrate what is at stake in this "information-war sphere" today (May 2022), one may point to something I anticipated before (Olivier 2021), in the form of an event centred on a specific social institution, such as the sphere of law as concretised in litigation practices. This may indeed have happened very recently, in the guise of the unfolding of a paradigmatic clash, or fundamental divergence in informational and communicational strategy—explicable along the lines of the Derridean conceptual distinction between hyper-pre-programmed, mechanical message-repetition, on the one hand, and "repeating differently" on the other—that has emerged in mainstream *and* alternative media (the former position represented by AFP Canada 2022; the latter, "resistance" position by Annett 2022, 2022a and 2022b). Because the former is a response by the official narrative to the alternative position—that I call the "resistance" (which itself represents a prior response to the official narrative)—it makes sense to examine the resistance communication first. Here it is worthwhile to look at (and listen to) the video posted by Annett (2022) first, where he summarises the case against the "cabal" or mainstream group of people held accountable by the International Common Law Court of Justice, before reading the article about it (Annett 2022a). In the latter, Annett writes:

> The International Court that forced Pope Benedict from office in 2013 has struck a blow against the Covid corporatocracy by convicting top officials of Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, China, and the Vatican of Crimes against Humanity.

> The Court's verdict sentences seventy-five individuals to life imprisonment, seizes their assets and disestablishes their corporations, and lawfully prohibits the further manufacture, sale, or use of their Covid vaccines as "products of medical genocide and mass murder."
>
> After a four-month trial convened under International Law, the judges of the International Common Law Court of Justice (ICLCJ) issued their historic verdict and sentence today, along with Arrest and Expropriation Warrants against the defendants.
>
> The convicted individuals include Albert Bourla and Emma Walmsley, the CEOs of Pfizer and GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals, Xi Jinping, President of China, "Pope" Francis (Jorge Bergoglio), "Queen" Elizabeth (Windsor), and Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada.

As may be expected, the mainstream "fact-checkers"—who have been exposed as rendering no more than "opinions" in the service of their orthodox employers (Mercola 2022a)—did not waste any time in repudiating the legitimacy of the ICLCJ's verdict and sentence. Alluding to social media on which the news circulated, AFP Canada (2022) reports that:

> Social media posts claim public figures including Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Britain's Queen Elizabeth, and Pope Francis have been convicted of genocide and face arrest over their support for Covid-19 vaccination. This is false; the Canadian government and independent experts say the document shared as evidence does not come from a legitimate court.

Whether countries like Canada recognise the ICLCJ as a court that can issue internationally valid verdicts or not, it did force Pope Benedict from office in 2013 with its findings that reflected negatively on his handling of church affairs, and the mainstream "cabal" would not welcome what Annett (2022b) reports on as follows:

> Protesters on three continents are shutting down Covid "vaccinations" this week in the wake of the recent historic conviction of Big Pharma, government, and church leaders by an international Court. And convicted Pharma CEOs are facing imminent arrest by Court Sheriffs in New York City and London …
>
> Last Monday and again today [19 January; BO], ICLCJ Sheriffs armed with arrest warrants sought to detain the convicted felons Albert Bourla and Emma Walmsley, the CEOs of Pfizer and GlaxoSmithKline, at their homes in Scarsdale, New York, and Greenwich, England.

The stark contrast between the messages sent into global communication-space by the two countervailing agencies, or adversaries in the global information-war being waged at present, is obvious. As I have argued at length elsewhere (Olivier 2021), this represents a *differend* (Lyotard), or situation where different parties articulate their claims in terms sufficiently incommensurate to preclude common ground, which

therefore remains elusive. As already demonstrated above, the present article construes it in an analogous manner with recourse to Derrida's deconstruction of communication by means of the two kinds of "yes" found in Joyce's *Ulysses*.

Conclusion: Habermas and Communication

To conclude this article, the preceding discussion would be made somewhat more accessible at a philosophical level by recasting Derrida's fairly esoteric perspective on communication in terms of concepts that are probably better known than Derrida's, namely those framing Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action.

Habermas—the philosopher of communication—sheds light on the two kinds of communication in question here ("mainstream" and "alternative") with his distinction between two types of communication, namely what he terms "strategic action" as opposed to "communicative action." Both of these have unmistakable ethical implications (Brand 1990, 15–16; Habermas 1987, 121, 113–157). Briefly, from a discourse-theoretical perspective, the first kind covers informational actions and exchanges which are disingenuous (that is, deceitful). Put differently, it covertly promotes the interests of the speaker-subject of this discourse at the cost of the receiver(s) or listener(s) in question. Where such "strategic action" operates there is therefore a tension, if not an outright contradiction between what is stated at the overt level, and what is hidden by this. For example, when a father tells his family that they cannot afford to go on their usual summer holiday because of an increase in the cost of living, but secretly saves that money to buy the luxury sedan he desires to be able to keep up the appearance of being as wealthy as his younger brother, this is "strategic (or instrumental) action." In everyday relations between people, "strategic action" happens all the time, of course—not only in families, but in companies and in educational and governmental institutions too.

Contrary to "strategic action," its opposite "communicative action" marks an attempt to be as sincere and open in acts of communication as one can possibly be. Habermas characterises it by pointing out that in such acts of "communicative action" one puts all one's "validity claims" on the table. All it means is that one should attempt, as best you can, not to hide anything intentionally, but instead to furnish the grounds or reasons for advancing a specific position in one's communicational exchanges. For example, when two people quarrel, instead of hiding the reasons for their mutual dissatisfaction (lest it should aggravate the situation further) all the relevant motives for one's actions or attitude should be brought up for discussion. Needless to emphasise, this is diametrically opposed to "strategic action" where such motives are deliberately covered up.

It is not as easy as it may seem to practice "communicative action," firstly because—even if it does not happen at a conscious level—most of us are subject to the unconscious desire to advance our own interests and aims most of the time, and therefore, we tend to practise a kind of "strategic action" more often than not. Moreover, in my judgement,

Habermas underestimates the extent to which unconscious motives undermine even our best intentions to communicate openly and sincerely (Lacan 1977, 58). Nevertheless, the distinction between "action" that is either "strategic" or "communicative" indicates graphically Habermas's conviction (which Derrida shares with him) that communication is always a kind of "doing" instead of being mere noise. When we communicate, we are engaged in an activity that implicitly aims at getting something done, or—in the case of ostensibly "disinterested" descriptions, such as those comprising Isaac Newton's macro-mechanics—laying the basis for future actions. In Newtonian physics' case these include actions that enabled humans to land on the moon and return from there (although relativity as defined by relativity physics also played a role).

With the above in mind, it is not difficult to see that the kind of communication and information that emanate from the orthodox, mainstream "pandemic" discourse fall squarely in the category of instrumental, "strategic action" as defined by Habermas, while communication on the part of those alternative agencies advancing the cause of the "resistance" to the mainstream narrative corresponds, largely, with "communicative action." I wrote "largely" because there may be instances where representatives of the resistance lapse into practising "strategic action" in their eagerness to advance their cause. But in order to defeat its powerful adversary, mostly it has to be able to demonstrate that it is on the side of the ("empiricist") "truth" concerning lockdowns, social distancing and wearing of masks (none of which work, as has been demonstrated; Mercola 2021 and 2022c), and especially regarding the putative, but spurious, "safety and efficacy" of the so-called "vaccines." Hence, the distinction between these two irreconcilable camps in the current "information war" corresponds, by and large, to the two species of communication highlighted by Habermas—"strategic action" and "communicative action."

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